

## Sunart Community Company

**Board Meeting** 7:30pm Wednesday 28th July (Zoom) 2021

**Attending:** P Sharples (PS)(Chair), J Hilder (JH)(Treasurer), J Jones (JJ)(Secretary), D Barker (DB), J Madden (JM), J Tyldesley (JT), Jane Mellis JMe);

**Apologies:** B Drinkwater (BD), D Calver (DC)

### Agenda Item:

1. **Welcome:** J Hilder welcomed people to the meeting as P Sharples was delayed joining.
2. **Acceptance of Minutes** of last meeting 23<sup>rd</sup> June 2021 & any matters arising. Under matters arising re picnic bench: the bench requires some attention and so it hasn't been borrowed by the Bothy Bar, who have managed to obtain benches elsewhere. JM asked where the picnic bench was located and did it belong to the Highland Council (HC). After discussion it was clarified that the HC benches were further along and fixed in the ground and were in a poor state.  
JH asked for an amendment: Item 8, first sentence to read, "Lara Van de Peer has now finished and started her new job". Amendment agreed.
3. **Community Company planning**  
This item has been rescheduled for the next meeting 22<sup>nd</sup> September 2021. There is a Longrigg Woodland meeting scheduled for the 1<sup>st</sup> September and the Longrigg pop-up stall for the 25<sup>th</sup> & 26<sup>th</sup> September
4. **Update** (brief) on:
  - Longrigg Woodland – See above for meeting dates. Alistair MacLean has agreed the stall can go outside the Village Store. JJ will draft an insert for the De tha dol? to promote the pop-up stall
  - Oakwood – Jane explained that Oakwood is going well; the income is up on the previous month and also on the same month last year. There seem to be plenty of visitors about and at the moment and the opening hours seem ok. Jane has spoken with Alistair and he is happy for another Christmas Market and that food there will be available in the café. JH mentioned that our electricity provider had been in touch offering us different fixed term contract deal. We still have 12 months to run on our current contract and after discussion it was agreed to continue the current contract and shop around when the expiry date approaches. There was also a brief discussion as to whether solar panels should be installed and Oakwood go off-grid – something for the planning meeting in September. JH had met with a representative and Alistair and discussed a vehicle charging point, which is something we had on our "things to explore" list. It appears Strontian meets the Government criteria and there would be grants available to pay for the installation. A possible location is behind Oakwood and might use part of the village green, depending on the size of the bay needed e.g. for large vehicles. The feasibility will be done in the autumn and installation would be next year. Directors expressed their support for this proposal.
  - Men's Shed – JT offered to speak with Dochie MacCormick about digging the trenches for water and sewer connections but hasn't had a reply so JT will follow this up. JJ will purchase an 8 ton bottle jack so we can raise the Portacabin. JM asked to clarify whether Sean Corrigan had waived our outstanding payment of £2,500 as it had been discussed but doesn't appear to be in the minutes. The secretary apologised and it was agreed this had been discussed and not included in previous minutes. The directors also wish to express the gratitude and thanks to Sean his generosity in this matter.
  - Loch/ Moorings – Jetty and Green Shed – it has not been possible to jet wash the bottom of the slipway as the Michael Calver's pressure washer is out of commission. There is still the concreting to be done which will now be later in the year. Our

solicitors have informed us that the Crown Estate are finalising the lease and so the final £700 payment has been transferred. With regards to maintaining the area around the jetty car park: after the “Water Festival” two years ago a “Friends of Loch Sunart” group was proposed - JH will look to progress this. There have been some complaints about canoe / kayak users blocking the slipway and car parking areas. There is a sign in the noticeboard however we will look to improve the signage and where signs are located. We have purchased a donation box and this will be located on the wall of the green shed.

- Paths – a donation box has been purchased and passed to Pete Madden for mounting on the hatchery wall for parking donations for vehicles using the Ardnastaing beach.
  - Website/ Communications – Becky has produced a businesses database. She is also working on a householder database as due to GDPR as there is now no access to the non-disclosed electoral roll. In order to check the accuracy and the currency of the information, a hard copy will be circulated to directors, so local knowledge can be applied, as there have been a number of changes in the last 4-5 years. We will use this database to inform people about Company activities e.g. the Longrigg Woodland consultation. There is now an Instagram account for Oakwood and Becky has been posting pictures
5. **Assets** (standing item) - JJ and DB will update the record and look at ways of presenting information some of which might be then placed on the website.  
The Angling Club boats – JH had noticed that there was an issue with the insurance cover for the two boats on Loch Doilet. It appears the boats weren't included as it was assumed, in error, that these were on an Angling Club policy. The confusion arises as the Angling Club collects the hire fees but the boats sit as assets of the Community Company. JH has been in email contact with Zurich, our insurers, and the matter has been resolved, at no addition fee. He has also repaired a buoyancy aid, which are included on our policy.
6. **Income generation** (standing item) - This year our main event will be the Christmas Market. The “Water Festival”, which was to be run alongside the Three Lochs event, has been postponed. There will now be a smaller, local event later in the year.
7. **Finance**, including Common Benefit Fund (CBF) & Oakwood – Current A/c £24,226.05; Oakwood A/c £9,453.56 although there are payments due to producers. The income from Oakwoods is positive and hopefully will cover the running costs and Jane's salary. The Community Benefit Fund – there is an autumn panel due in September so JH will remind Becky, as the Company provides the admin support for the CBF.
8. **Staff matters** (standing item) – nothing to report re JMe and BD. There is money form the CBF for the Longrigg Woodland consultation and for a new community consultation exercise.
9. **AOB**
- A request has been received for helping a local employer to fund some First Aid training. After discussion it was agreed that it wasn't appropriate for the Company to provide this funding. However, we will promote the First Aid training on the website. Also the Company will offer this training to people who volunteer e.g. at Oakwood and we will pay if there are requests
  - West Lochaber Transport Project – the project funding has finished and the continuing costs are £14,400 p.a. just for the vehicle alone. The project is asking for a subsidy from local community companies. JH pointed out that this situation is common; there is central funding for setting up trial projects but not for continuing costs after the project finishes. JH has explained that this request might be better addressed to Urram, which it the local charity established following the project run by the five community councils, and it is set up for community care on the peninsulas. JJ to reply and explain that it does not fit with the Community Company objectives.

- Church of Scotland in Strontian – An email has been received by the Community Council who have forwarded it to the Company. Donald McCorkindale has written and explained that the Church of Scotland will be divesting themselves of the building and there will be a meeting on the 8<sup>th</sup> September. After discussion the directors are in favour of saving the building if possible, as it is an important heritage asset with which many in our community will agree. JM will attend the meeting on the 8<sup>th</sup> September on behalf of the Company and JJ will take this to the Community Council meeting on the 12<sup>th</sup> August.

10. **Date of next meeting** 7:30pm 22<sup>nd</sup> September 2021 (Zoom) and Longrigg planning on 1<sup>st</sup> September.